

**KINGDOM PRAYER & STUDY GUIDE**  
**WEEK 6:**

***"ENTERING SABBATH REST"***

**FEBRUARY 17-23, 2019**

**FOLLOWING**  
**JESUS:**

**EXPLORING CHRISTIAN**

**"BEST PRACTICES"**

**FOR A MEANINGFUL LIFE**



**WINDSOR VILLAGE**  
*Church Family*



# **FOLLOWING JESUS:**

**EXPLORING CHRISTIAN  
“BEST PRACTICES”  
FOR A MEANINGFUL LIFE**

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FEBRUARY 17-23, 2019*

**Week 6:  
ENTERING SABBATH REST**

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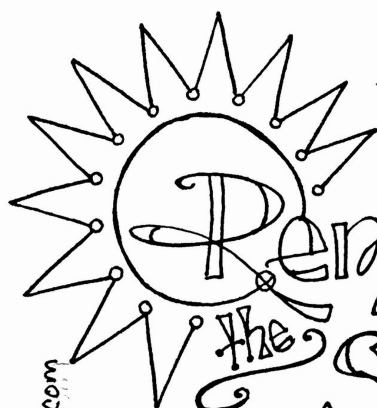
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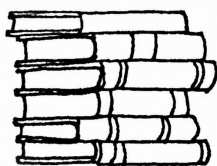
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Remember  
the Sabbath  
day, to  
keep it holy.

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Exodus 20:8  
esv

# Day 36:

## Introducing Sabbath

### 1. Center Down

Our breath prayer for today: As you inhale, whisper, “*We enter into...*” As you exhale, whisper, “*...Your rest, O Lord.*”

### 2. Slowly read aloud the following Scripture passage

*[And God said,] Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. (Exodus 20:8-11, ESV)*

### For further exploration:

Videos: <http://b.link/DrBrownSabbath> (5 min)

<http://b.link/MarvaDawnSabbath> (11 min)

### **3. Kingdom Prayer**

Heavenly Father, we thank You for the nations and people of the world. Thank You for being Yahweh Shalom, the Lord God of wholeness and restoration. Thank You for being Emmanuel, God with us, among the nations. Lord, we, Your children, long for You as the deer longs for streams of water. We thirst for You, the living God. Father, all that is within us will wait quietly for You. You alone are our rock and our salvation. You are our fortress where we will not be shaken. Our victory and honor come from You alone. Lord, You are majestic and we bless Your holy and righteous Name.

Eternal Father, let Your Kingdom come and Your will be done around the world. We confess that in the places of distress, war, and disaster around the world that the people who are suffering will realize that You are mighty to save and that You loved them so much that You gave Your one and only Son, so that whoever believes in Him would not perish, but have eternal life. Lord, raise up and strengthen those who follow Jesus around the world that they will be bold in their witness of You and compassionate to those who might persecute them. You have not given Your people a spirit of fear but a Spirit of power, love and self-control. We call forth justice to run down like water and righteousness to be spread abroad among the nations and that the hearts of oppressive leaders will be turned to You.



Holy Spirit, the world needs Your salvation. We cry out “Even so Lord Jesus quickly come!” Touch the hearts of the global community to seek justice and to love mercy rather than the vanity of riches at the expense of lives and caring for Your creation. Lord, touch the hearts and minds of world leaders to seek You and to walk the path of righteousness for You Name’s sake and for the sake of the people they are meant to serve in the nations around the world.

Merciful Father, please forgive all of us for our many sins. Forgive us for disobedience, rebellion, unbelief, forms of idolatry, shedding of innocent blood, and the rejection of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Forgive those who prey on people in tragic circumstances. Forgive those Christians who live among the nations for not adequately praying and for not consistently sharing Your love and Your Word. Lord, forgive me for *(list any sins that you have committed.)*

Holy Spirit, remind us of those we need to forgive and help us to be quick to forgive. As for me, Holy Spirit, bring to my remembrance those I need to forgive. *(Take a moment and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you names or faces of people that you may need to forgive. As He reveals them say, “I forgive name of person(s).” Now, trust the Lord to heal any wounds in your soul caused by unforgiveness.)*

Holy Spirit, help us not to yield to temptation but deliver us from the evil one.

We worship You, O Great Deliverer! All praise belongs to You. You are the Lord God of Israel who alone does such wonderful things. You are praised among the nations! We will praise Your glorious Name forever. Let the whole earth be filled with Your glory, Amen and Amen!

***Scripture References for the Written Text:** Judges 6:24, Psalm 42:1-2, Psalm 62:5-7, Matthew 6:10, Isaiah 59:1, John 3:16, II Timothy 1:2, Amos 5:24, Proverbs 20:18, Matthew 6:13, Psalm 72:18-19*

#### **4. Concepts to Consider**

In our world where productivity is valued almost above everything else, Sabbath is God's life-saving gift to us. It's a day we are bidden to cease from "doing," trust God for His provision and just be. We have an opportunity to inhale the "joy of our salvation" and to exhale the cares of the week. It is a day to prioritize God and people over things and schedules.

In Scripture *Shabbat* ( שַׁבָּת *shah-BAHT*) is derived from a word that means "to cease" or "to stop and rest." *Shabbat* is mentioned in all five books of the Torah, the Prophets, all four Gospels, and in the books of Colossians and Hebrews. The frequency of its mention (150+ times) at the very least indicates how important taking a day to stop is to God! Traditionally, *Shabbat* was observed by the earliest Jewish followers of Jesus (Friday evening-->Saturday evening) *and* they also celebrated the "Lord's Day" (Sunday) in honor of the Resurrection of Jesus. Over time these two observances were melded into our Sunday worship observances.

As we discussed last week, it is still vital to gather physically with the assembled Body on a regular basis to celebrate the Lord's day and it is equally important to observe a day of cessation. A "Sabbath Rest" and corporate worship may occur on the same day, but they don't necessarily have to, especially if you work on Sunday.

God designed the human person to need this "rhythm of life" where we work, then stop and rest at regular intervals. We do not operate well physically, emotionally or spiritually when we don't make time and space to rest.

This week we will explore some of the practices and teachings surrounding Sabbath and how we can live more fully as God intended. If you think about it, we were made to be "Sabbath People" who are called to live into the shalom that God is bringing to the earth through us, the Body of Christ, empowered by the Spirit of the Risen Christ, who *is* the Lord of the Sabbath.

## **5. Reflection Questions**

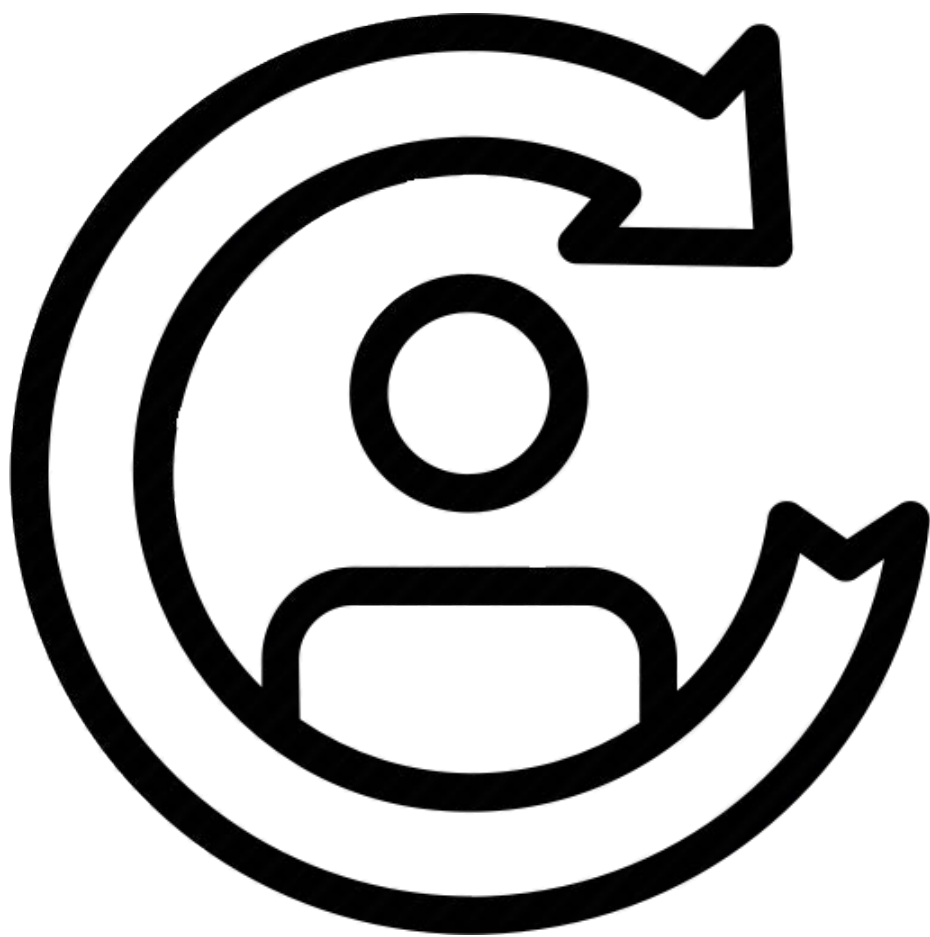
- a. **Personal Reflection:** What do you want to know more about concerning "Sabbath?" What is something you read today that piqued your curiosity?

**b. Kingdom Reflection:** Sabbath was first given to the People called Israel, but in Jesus Sabbath and all it means is extended to all people. Take some time to pray for Sabbath Shalom to become a reality in the world. What is on your heart to pray for in the world today?

**Optional Time of Centering/Soaking:**

*If possible, take some time, perhaps 5 to 15 minutes, to get into a comfortable position and simply allow the Lord to minister to you at a deep level (Psalm 42:7). Turn off or put down all distractions. Close your eyes. Hold in your thoughts a meaningful word, phrase, or image from the Scripture passages you read today. Release all other thoughts and concerns into the Presence of the Lord. If your thoughts wander, that's okay, just gently return to your Scriptural word, phrase, or image. You may want to set a timer.*

Notes:



# Day 37:

## Pressing the "Reset Button"

### 1. Center Down

Our breath prayer for today: As you inhale, whisper, *"You restore our souls...* As you exhale, whisper, *"...and lift our heads!"*

### 2. Slowly read aloud the following Scriptures

*In that day I will **restore** the fallen booth of David: I will **repair** its gaps, **restore** its ruins, and **rebuild** it as in the days of old, so that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations that are called by My name—this is the Lord's declaration—He will do this.*

*Hear this! The days are coming—this is the Lord's declaration—when the plowman will overtake the reaper and the one who treads grapes, the sower of seed. The mountains will drip with sweet wine, and all the hills will flow with it. I will restore the fortunes of My people Israel. They will rebuild and occupy ruined cities, plant vineyards and drink their wine, make gardens and eat their produce. I will plant them on their land, and they will never again be uprooted from the land I have given them. Yahweh your God has spoken (Amos 9:11-16, HSCB)*

## For further exploration:

Videos: <http://scripture.live/amos9>

<http://b.link/haftarahAmos> (scholarly, 48 min)

Article: <http://b.link/ResetArticle>

### 3. Kingdom Prayer

Heavenly Father, our souls honor You. Thank You for our family relationships. We thank You for Your peace umpiring our familial relationships and interactions. Lord, we thank You for fulfilling Your plans and purposes in our lives and for surrounding us with favor like a shield. Thank You for blessing us continually with Your loving-kindness and tender mercies. Lord, Your mercy endures forever. You are great and Your power is absolute. Your understanding is beyond comprehension. We love You and extol Your Holy Name. Out of the mouths of babes and infants, You have ordained strength. What are mere mortals that You should think of them, human beings that You should care for them?

Omnipotent Father, we acknowledge that we are not fighting against flesh and blood enemies for our families, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. Therefore, we gird ourselves with the full armor of God as we fight for the restoration of families in the United States of America. We rebuke every enemy that is coming against our families including: domestic



violence, divorce, adultery, incest, selfishness, poor communication and broken homes. For the first time in recorded history, there are now more single adults than married adults. We understand that not all are called to be married, but we rebuke the spirits of pride, stubbornness, fear and greed that prevent those who are supposed to be married from fulfilling their purpose. Lord, You told Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply; to fill and subdue the earth and to have dominion. Lord, it is Your will that the people created in Your image be in charge here and not the forces of darkness.

***List those families that you know are in trouble. Now ask the Holy Spirit how you can pray for them:***

Holy Spirit, help us, as a nation, to make the family a priority again. Help parents to stop being so focused on material items that they fail to spend time with their children and impart Godly self-esteem and emotional stability into them. Remind us that God's Word should be our guide and not the norms and customs of the world. Help our parents to stop allowing the television, internet or video games to raise their children, but instead to spend time with their children and impart Godly values and wisdom into them so that when they have grown up, they will not depart from Your ways. Help our married couples to honor one another and not take each other for granted. Keep the lines of communication open in these marriages so that the marriage bed will not be defiled. Help our married couples to honor

their marriage vows and not be so quick to look for a way out when things get difficult.

Merciful Father, please forgive our American families for sin. Forgive us for allowing our jobs to be a greater priority than our families. Forgive us for taking our loved ones for granted. Forgive us for not praying for our family members consistently. Forgive us for strife, anger, envy, jealousy, adultery and for verbal or physical abuse within our homes. Lord, forgive me for *(list any sins that you have committed)*.

Holy Spirit, remind us all of those we need to forgive and help us to be quick to forgive. As for me, Holy Spirit, bring to my remembrance those I need to forgive. *(Take a moment and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you names or faces of people that you may need to forgive. As He reveals them say, "I forgive name of person(s)." Now, trust the Lord to heal any wounds in your soul caused by unforgiveness.)*

Holy Spirit, help our families not to yield to temptation but deliver us from the evil one.

Sovereign Lord, You are King! You are robed in majesty and armed with strength. The world stands firm and cannot be shaken. Your throne has stood from time immemorial. You are from the everlasting past. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

#### 4. Concepts to Consider

God is in the “re-” business. And Sabbath is all about “re-.” Can you think of some “re-”words associated with God? Take a few moments to write them down:

Amos 9:11-16 are significant “re-”verses to re-member! Here God swoops in at the end of a pretty dismal set of prophecies and warnings to Israel’s ten Northern tribes (*aka* “Northern Kingdom”) to deliver a word of hope. Repeatedly the Lord encourages the people, *“I will restore I will repair, and I will rebuild.”* (“ah-KEEM” אָקִים translated in 9:11 as “restore” implies “I will raise up after having fallen;” “v'gah-DAR-tee” וְגִדַּרְתִּי translated in 9:11 as “repair” is perhaps better rendered as “I will re-wall or to seal up”; and “oov-nee-TEE-hah” וּבִנִּיתִיהָ translated as “rebuild” infers “I will rebuild so as to restore.”)

Further, the context of this final passage has an agricultural and nurturing overtone. The earliest commands about Sabbath are agricultural in nature (Exodus 34:21). The imagery here in Amos is clear. Not only will their economy and means of feeding themselves be restored, but they themselves, as the covenant people will be “planted” (9:15).

Throughout the messages of the Biblical prophets we often see them reaching back to the creation story (Genesis 1-3) and looking forward to a new creation. Indeed, in the Book of Revelation we see an implied universal Sabbath being brought about through the re-creative work of God (Revelation 21-22).

Why does all this matter? Because God desires to bring us a word of hope today that is based in the concept of Sabbath. He desires to “raise you up, after having fallen” (Proverbs 24:16). He is working to seal up and re-wall the holes in your broken defenses. (We all have blind spots and no one can live a Christian life alone.) And when the Lord rebuilds, He doesn’t haphazardly throw up two sticks and a bit of stucco; He rebuilds with quality upon a Rock and sets our feet on a sure foundation (*see: Matthew 7, Psalm 40*).

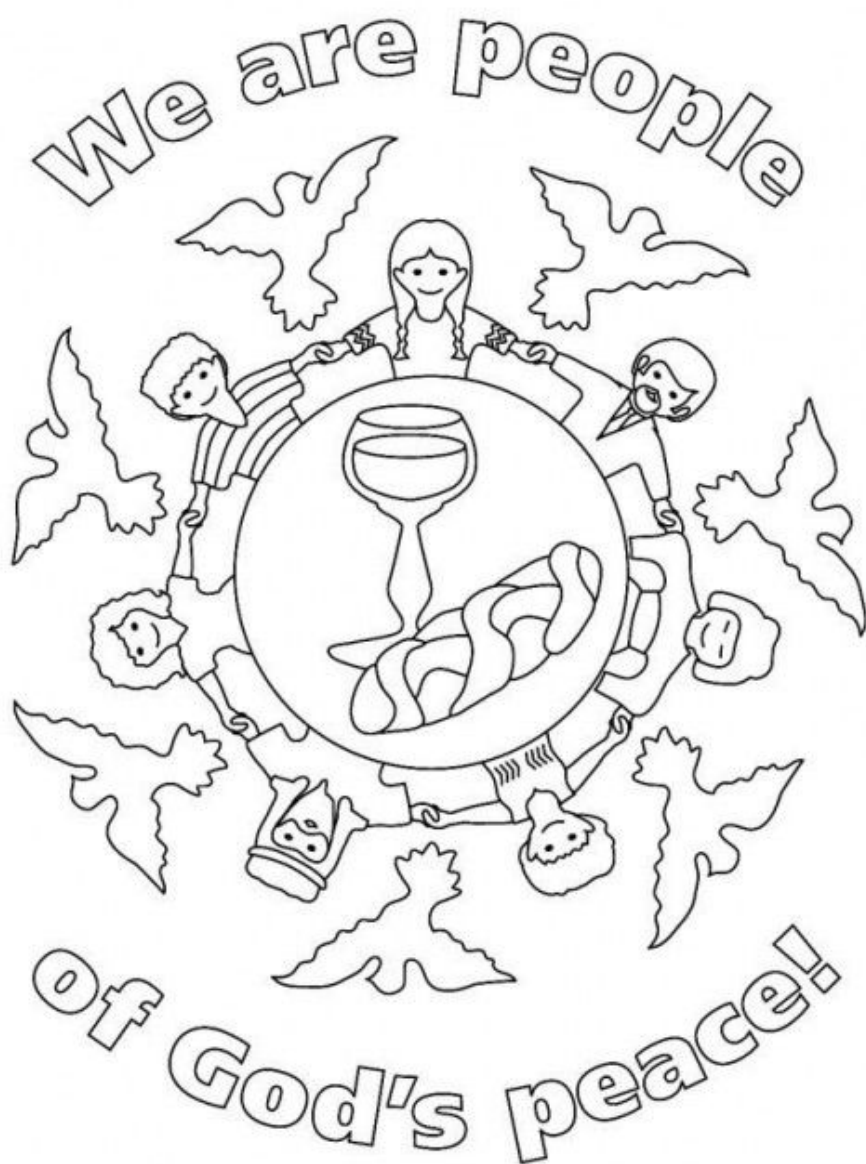
## **5. Reflection Questions**

**a. Personal Reflection:** Sabbath gives us the time and space to hit the “reset button” on our lives. What needs to be repaired, restored, and/or rebuilt in your life?

**b. Kingdom Reflection:** Our world needs an understanding of Sabbath Re-set. Our world is generally set on “overload” rather than the sacred rhythm of work/rest that God established. Where can you plant seeds of Sabbath around you?

**Optional Time of Centering/Soaking:**

*If possible, take some time, perhaps 5 to 15 minutes, to get into a comfortable position and simply allow the Lord to minister to you at a deep level (Psalm 42:7). Turn off or put down all distractions. Close your eyes. Hold in your thoughts a meaningful word, phrase, or image from the Scripture passages you read today. Release all other thoughts and concerns into the Presence of the Lord. If your thoughts wander, that's okay, just gently return to your Scriptural word, phrase, or image. You may want to set a timer.*



# Day 38:

## Sabbath Everywhere

### 1. Center Down

Our breath prayer for today: As you inhale, whisper, ***“In the stillness...”*** As you exhale, whisper, ***“...we await Your voice, O Lord.”***

### 2. Slowly read aloud the following Scripture

*When Elijah saw how things were, he ran for dear life to Beersheba, far in the south of Judah. He left his young servant there and then went on into the desert another day's journey. He came to a lone broom bush and collapsed in its shade, wanting in the worst way to be done with it all—to just die: “Enough of this, God! Take my life—I'm ready to join my ancestors in the grave!” **Exhausted, he fell asleep under the lone broom bush. Suddenly an angel shook him awake and said, “Get up and eat!” He looked around and, to his surprise, right by his head were a loaf of bread baked on some coals and a jug of water. He ate the meal and went back to sleep. The angel of God came back, shook him awake again, and said, “Get up and eat some more—you've got a long journey ahead of you.” He got up, ate and drank his fill, and set out. Nourished by that meal, he walked forty days and nights, all the way to the mountain of God, to Horeb. When he got there, he crawled into a cave and went to sleep.***

*Then the Word of God came to him: “So Elijah, what are you doing here?” “I’ve been working my heart out for the God-of-the-Angel-Armies,” said Elijah. “The people of Israel have abandoned Your covenant, destroyed the places of worship, and murdered Your prophets. I’m the only one left, and now they’re trying to kill me.” Then he was told, “Go, stand on the mountain at attention before God. God will pass by.” A hurricane wind ripped through the mountains and shattered the rocks before God, but God wasn’t to be found in the wind; after the wind an earthquake, but God wasn’t in the earthquake; and after the earthquake fire, but God wasn’t in the fire; and after the fire a gentle and quiet whisper. (1 Kings 19:3-12, MSG)*

**For further exploration:**

Video: <http://b.link/OprahSabbath>

<http://b.link/RichterSabbathSoul> (scholarly, 35 min)

Podcast: <http://b.link/HeiserLeviticusSabbath>  
(semi-scholarly, 60 min)

**3. Kingdom Prayer**

Almighty Father, even though people everywhere talk about recession and foreclosures, we are thankful in all circumstances, for this is Your will for us who belong to Christ Jesus. We offer sacrifices of thanksgiving and sing joyfully about Your glorious acts. Father, we thank You for being the source of our supply. Our Father, who created the heavens and the earth and everything in it. You give breath to everyone and life to everyone who walks the earth. We love You and come before You in the Name of Your only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. We will praise



Your mighty deeds, O Sovereign Lord. We will tell everyone that You alone are just. We praise You, Lord! Father God, we are joyful because we fear You and delight in obeying Your commands. We are blessed to be Your children.

Heavenly Father, we are encouraged that You give prosperity to the poor and protect those who suffer. We confess that our children will be successful everywhere; an entire generation of Godly people will be blessed. Our children will be wealthy, and their good deeds will last forever. Lord, we expect business leaders in our community to honor Your Word and live by Your precepts. We command light to shine in the darkness for the Godly. We declare that they are generous, compassionate, and righteous. Good comes to those who lend money generously and conduct their business fairly. Such people will not be overcome by evil. Those who are righteous will be long remembered. During economic difficulties in our nation and around the world, we claim prosperity for our communities. We decree that merchants in our communities will not fear bad news; they confidently trust You, Lord, to care for them. They are confident and fearless and can face foes triumphantly. They share freely and give generously to those in need. Their good deeds will be remembered forever. They will have influence and honor. The wicked will see this and be infuriated.

They will grind their teeth in anger; they will slink away, their hopes thwarted. Yes, Lord we expect You to pour down Your blessings. We decree that our land will yield its bountiful harvest. Father, we will support the businesses of the Godly men and women in our communities.

Righteous Father, we lift up to You believers in our communities who are providing goods and services in a fair and decent manner and pray that our fellow citizens will do business with them. May they be given favor by governmental and civic agencies so that their enterprises will not be impeded, but will flourish. Holy Spirit, inspire these merchants to deal with residents in our communities fairly. Father, deal with the hearts of business owners in all communities who take advantage of poor and destitute laborers, whether they are fellow Americans or foreigners living in our towns. Empower employees in our area to be diligent, honest and trustworthy and to work to increase their knowledge and productivity. Holy Spirit, show unscrupulous business people in our communities the error of their dealings and touch their hearts to repent and change their business practices. Let the wicked change their ways and banish the very thought of doing wrong. Let them turn to You, that You may have mercy on them. Yes, Holy Spirit, help them to turn to God, our Father, for He will forgive generously. Admonish those in our communities who do not support local merchants or who try to exploit their businesses. Cause them to repent and seek forgiveness.

Holy Spirit, remind me to support business in our communities which are worthy of our patronage.

***Make a list of businesses in your communities and begin to support them:***

Righteous Father, You are so good, so ready to forgive, so full of unfailing love for all who ask for Your help. Lord, forgive the business owners in our community for all acts of sinfulness. Forgive those who have not been diligent in seeking Your leadership for their businesses. Forgive those who do not trust in You and Your business principles but lean on their own understanding. Forgive those who have compromised Your Word in order to make a profit. Forgive those who have not treated their employees and customers fairly. Forgive those who have not been faithful in giving through tithes and offerings. Forgive those who have not properly taken care of or shown respect for the community they live in. Lord, forgive me for ***(list any sins that you have committed.)***

Holy Spirit, remind us all of those we need to forgive and help us to be quick to forgive. As for me, Holy Spirit, bring to my remembrance those I need to forgive. ***(Take a moment and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you names or faces of people that you may need to forgive. As He reveals them say, "I forgive name of person(s)." Now, trust the Lord to heal any wounds in your soul caused by unforgiveness.)***

Holy Spirit, help us all not to yield to temptation  
but deliver us from the evil one.

Almighty God, You are awesome in Your sanctuary.  
O God of Israel, You give power and strength to Your  
people. Praise be to You, God! Let all that we are  
praise You Lord, our God; how great You are! You  
are robed with honor and majesty. You live from  
everlasting to everlasting! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

**Scripture References for the Written Text:** *Isaiah 42:5, Psalm 71:16, Psalm 112:1, I Thessalonians 5:18, Psalm 107:22, Philippians 4:19, Job 5:11, Psalm 112:2-3, Psalm 112:4-6, Psalm 112:7-10, Isaiah 85:12, Deuteronomy 24:14, Isaiah 55:7, Psalm 86:5, Proverbs 3:5, Psalm 68:35, Psalm 104:1*

#### **4. Concepts to Consider**

Sabbath has both “macro-” and a “micro-” aspects. We find Sabbath principles popping up everywhere in “big” and “small” Biblical settings: In Elijah’s provision, rest, and reassurance (*in the shadow of the very mountain where God gave the Sabbath laws!*); throughout Jesus’ ministry (*Matthew 11:28-30; 12:8*); in the “Sabbath year” for allowing farmland to lie fallow (*Leviticus 25:2-4*); in the “no customary work days” of the Biblical Festivals (*e.g., Sukkot/Feast of Tabernacles; Leviticus 23:39*); in the anticipated New Creation (*Revelation 21-22*); and, of course, in the observed single day (*Exodus 20:8-11*). So, if Sabbath permeates the whole of

Scripture then it stands to reason that it can also infuse to the “big” and “small” actions and interactions of our daily lives.

What would it mean for us to ask the Holy Spirit--the Sabbath Spirit--to help us seek “Sabbath moments” each day? Reclaiming the time and space to “cease striving” and recognize the beauty and sacredness that *is* present around us. It doesn’t have to be a big dramatic thing (although it might be on occasion). Stretching Sabbath beyond a single day into how we experience and exude God’s Sabbath ongoingly is the basic call of all humanity. What if we began to identify God’s presence in the simple pleasures of life such as beautiful colors, a babbling brook, a sunset, rustling leaves, shimmering stars, a sunrise, a rock, a flower, the smell of fresh bread, children’s laughter, an unexpected kind word or action, *etc.*

**At its core Sabbath is about two things: 1. *Receiving* the bounty of God’s presence and covenant love then 2. *Releasing* that same love to others and into creation itself.** The absence of this “Sabbath ethos” is sadly evident in our world. Trashing the earth, trashing our bodies and minds, and trashing relationships are all symptoms of not observing the intended spirit of Sabbath. We need a “Sabbath-itude” adjustment!

Only God the Holy Spirit can give us the power to do what Psalm 46:11 admonishes: “drop everything and quit striving” and then you will begin to understand--to “know” relationally--our loving, covenant, re-creating God and His Sabbath intentions for us and the world.

## 5. Reflection Questions:

**a. Personal Reflection:** Elijah had difficulty perceiving the Sabbath provision of God as he fled Jezabel. When has it been difficult to see "Sabbath moments" in your life? Realize that today God is providing Sabbath spaces and places for you. *You may want to keep a record of those Sabbath moments today, as a means of encouragement.*

**b. Kingdom Reflection:** To adapt the old song, "What the world needs now is Sabbath, sweet Sabbath." What's in the news today that needs our earnest, Sabbath-infused prayerful attention?

### **Optional Time of Centering/Soaking:**

*If possible, take some time, perhaps 5 to 15 minutes, to get into a comfortable position and simply allow the Lord to minister to you at a deep level (Psalm 42:7). Turn off or put down all distractions. Close your eyes. Hold in your thoughts a meaningful word, phrase, or image from the Scripture you read today. Release all other thoughts and concerns into the Presence of the Lord. If your thoughts wander, that's okay, just gently return to your Scriptural word, phrase, or image. You may want to set a timer.*

-TRUST in-  
the LORD  
with all YOUR  
heart and legs

# PROVERBS



# Day 39:

## Trusting God in Sabbath

### 1. Center Down

Our “breath prayer” for today: As you inhale, whisper, “*We lean into You, Lord...*” As you exhale, whisper, “*...our Helper and Provider.*”

### 2. Slowly read aloud the following Scripture

*Trust in the Lord and do what is right! Settle in the land and maintain your integrity! Then you will take delight in the Lord, and He will answer your prayers. Commit your future to the Lord! Trust in Him, and He will act on your behalf. He will vindicate you in broad daylight, and publicly defend your just cause. Wait patiently for the Lord! Wait confidently for Him! Do not fret over the apparent success of a sinner, a man who carries out wicked schemes! Do not be angry and frustrated! Do not fret! That only leads to trouble!*

*The Lord grants success to the one whose behavior He finds commendable. Even if He trips, He will not fall headlong, for the Lord holds His hand. I was once young, now I am old. I have never seen a Godly [person] abandoned, or his children forced to search for food. All day long he shows compassion and lends to others, and his children are blessed. Turn away from evil! Do what is right! Then you will enjoy lasting security.  
(Psalm 37:3-8; 23-27, NET)*

## **For further exploration:**

Video: <http://b.link/TrustGod1>  
<http://b.link/KeenerTrust>  
<http://b.link/BethMooreTrust>

### **3. Kingdom Prayer**

Divine Father, how our hearts yearn to express our love for You! Thank You for Your grace. Thank You for knowing exactly what we need before we even ask. Thank You for never abandoning us or leaving our children begging for bread. Thank You for being our faithful source. We have always been able to depend on Your goodness. We take delight in You, Lord. We commit everything we do to You because we know we can trust You to help us. You direct our steps and You delight in every detail of our lives. Even though we sometimes stumble, we will never fall because You hold us by Your hand. You love us with an unfailing love and Your faithfulness endures forever. We find comfort in knowing that the very hairs on our heads are all numbered. Therefore, we are not afraid because we know how much You value us. We praise You Lord, for You have shown us the wonders of Your unfailing love!

Almighty Father, as a Church Family, we declare that we will not worry about what we will eat, what we will drink, or what we will wear. We trust that You already know our needs, so we will simply commit to seek Your Kingdom above all else and live righteously. Then, we can expect everything

we need to be added to us. We decree that we will keep the gates of provision open by giving cheerfully and not reluctantly. We know that if we continue to be obedient in our giving that You will generously provide all that we need. Not only that, but we will have plenty to share with others. We will learn to do good by meeting the urgent needs of others. We confess that our love for You, Father, will not be overshadowed by a love for the material things Your goodness provides for us. We believe that You will faithfully answer our prayers with awesome deeds. You crown the year with a bountiful harvest. Even the hard pathways overflow with abundance. We decree that You are our sun and shield, giving us grace and glory. You will withhold no good thing from us when we do what is right.

***Reflect on the goodness of God and praise Him for what He has provided for you:***

Holy Spirit, help us to acknowledge our motives when we ask for things. Help us to seek the Father only for what belongs to us, not to covet what doesn't. Help us to trust the Lord completely with our needs. Remind us that the Father causes everything to work together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose for them. Help us to keep a generous heart even when times are tough. Show us areas where we need to fortify our faith in God's faithfulness to us. Help us to teach our children to honor the Lord for all that He does for us. Remind us that we are not to compete with one another,

chasing after status and possessions. Keep our feet firmly planted on the ground. Remind us to keep a Kingdom perspective in all that we do. Sharpen our discernment to recognize opportunities to sow seed into good ground. Deliver us from being fearful about how our needs will be met.

Faithful Father, forgive us for being greedy, selfish, arrogant, rude, impatient, and thoughtless. Forgive us for murmuring and complaining while we wait for manifestation in our lives. Forgive us for our lack of good stewardship over what we already have. Forgive us for lying, cheating, and even stealing to get ahead. Forgive us for withholding our best gifts from You. Lord, forgive me for *(list any sins that You have committed)*.

Holy Spirit, remind us of all those we need to forgive and help us to be quick to forgive. As for me, Holy Spirit, bring to my remembrance those I need to forgive. *(Take a moment and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal names or faces of people that You may need to forgive. As He reveals them say, "I forgive name of person(s)." Now, trust the Lord to heal any wounds in Your soul caused by unforgiveness.)*

Holy Spirit, help us not to yield to temptation but deliver us from the evil one.

We praise You, Lord! How amazing are Your deeds! Everything You do reveals Your glory and majesty.

We know Your greatness, Father; that You are greater than any other god. You do whatever pleases You throughout all heaven and earth, and on the seas and in their depths. Your Name endures forever. Your fame is known to every generation. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

**Scripture References for the Written Text:** *Matthew 6:8, Psalm 37:25, Psalm 37:4-5, 23-24, Psalm 117:2, Luke 12:7, Matthew 6:31, 33, II Corinthians 9:7-8, Titus 3:14, Psalm 65:5, 11, Psalm 84:11, James 4:3, Proverbs 3:5, Romans 8:28, Matthew 6:13, Psalm 135:5-6, 13-14*

#### **4. Concepts to Consider**

When we observe a Sabbath day we are trusting the Lord to provide for us and to take care of all that concerns us throughout that day (and beyond). Sabbath reminds us that everything we have ultimately comes from the Lord and that He is the One Who is the Giver and Sustainer of all life. At a basic level *not* observing Sabbath is a kind of idolatry wherein we put our efforts and our agendas ahead of trusting God. *(To be clear, the only exceptions in Torah for not observing Sabbath are life or death emergencies. You can break sabbath to save a life!)*

Jesus in His Model Prayer gives us the “Sabbath-itude” of dependence on God for our “daily bread.” Sadly, however, we live in a society that pushes us to work 24/7. We somehow feel like we will be or have less or fall behind if we don’t constantly work and produce. In a way, taking a Sabbath day is like the tithe. In giving God one day of the week we are trusting that He

will provide for us all seven days, even though we only worked six.

In truly trusting God during the Sabbath--and not just going through the formal motions and legalistically fulfilling the external form of the day--we avoid the idolatry of legalism and abject self-reliance that can "so easily beset us (Hebrews 12:1)."

## 5. Reflection Questions

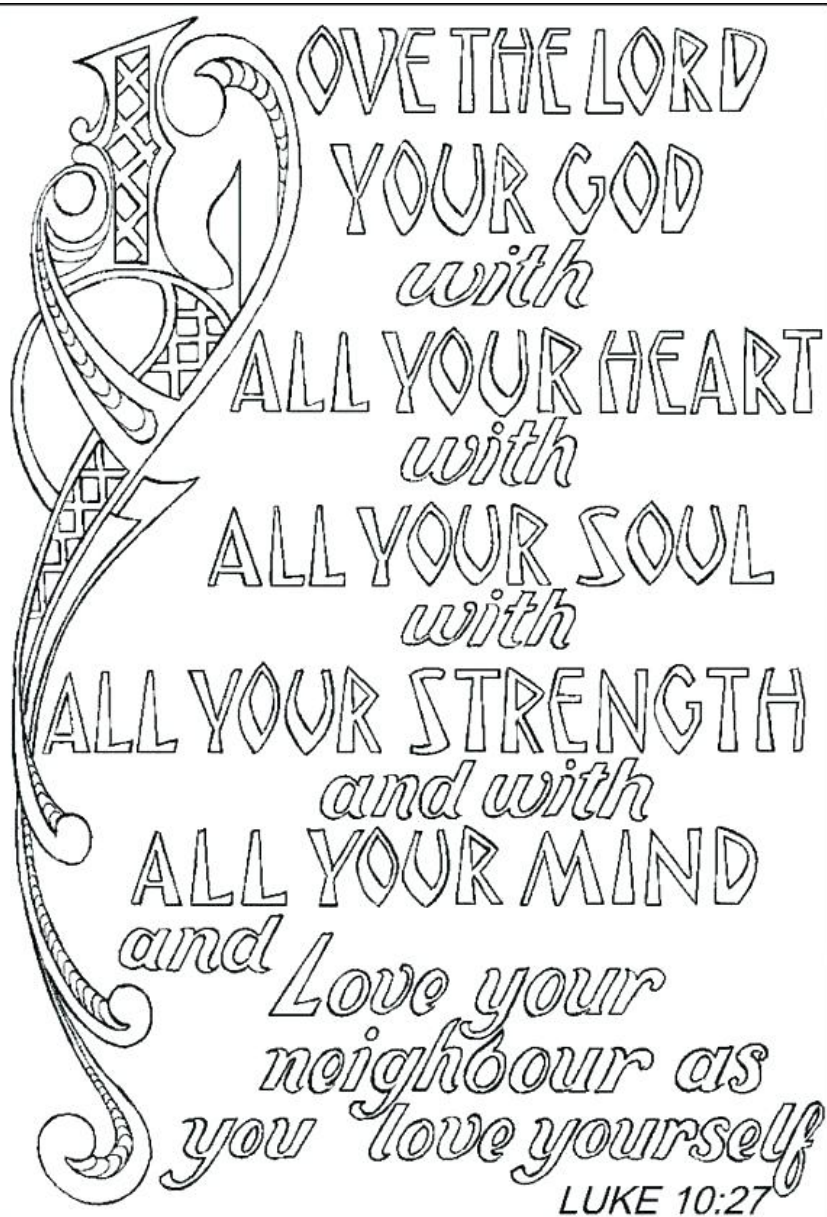
a. **Personal Reflection:** Have there been times when you have given into the pressure *not* to take a Sabbath day? If so, how did it affect you and your relationship with God?

b. **Kingdom Reflection:** Our world generally has no concept of Sabbath. It drones on and on and many people are crushed in the gears of material progress. By God's grace, what simple actions can we take today that may help shift our focus from the relentless pursuit of production, accumulation, and progress toward the restorative Sabbath ideals of "work/rest/restore" that God longs for us to embrace?

(See: the Pauline Rose story: <http://candles.live/PaulineRose>)

### **Optional Time of Centering/Soaking:**

*If possible, take some time, perhaps 5 to 15 minutes, to get into a comfortable position and simply allow the Lord to minister to you at a deep level (Psalm 42:7). Turn off or put down all distractions. Close your eyes. Hold in your thoughts a meaningful word, phrase, or image from the Scripture you read today. Release all other thoughts and concerns into the Presence of the Lord. If your thoughts wander, that's okay, just gently return to your Scriptural word, phrase, or image. You may want to set a timer.*





# Day 40:

## Sabbath as Justice

### 1. Center Down

As you inhale, whisper, ***“May Your justice...”*** As you exhale whisper, ***“...flow like streams of living water.”***

### 2. Slowly read aloud the following Scripture

*[And Yahweh said to Judah,] “Your priests violated My law and desecrated My holy things. They can’t tell the difference between sacred and secular. They tell people there’s no difference between right and wrong. **They’re contemptuous of My holy Sabbaths, profaning Me by trying to pull Me down to their level.** Your politicians are like wolves prowling and killing and rapaciously taking whatever they want. Your preachers cover up for the politicians by pretending to have received visions and special revelations. They say, “This is what God, the Master, says . . .” when God hasn’t said so much as one word. Extortion is rife, robbery is epidemic, the poor and needy are abused, outsiders are kicked around at will, with **no access to justice.**”* (Ezekiel 22:26-29, MSG)

**For further exploration:**

Videos: <http://b.link/HarperJusticeGospel>  
(20 min, but EXCELLENT. **PLEASE WATCH!**)

### **3. Kingdom Prayer**

Eternal Father, we thank You for being the just Judge. Thank You for hearing us when we call to You for help for our nation. Thank You for moving on the hearts of Your people to establish peace, justice and righteousness in the earth. Lord, we will praise You with all of our hearts. Your love for us is so very great; we will give glory to Your Name forever! Lord, You have rescued us from the depths of death. We will sing of Your unfailing love forever. Young and old will hear of Your faithfulness. Your unfailing love will last forever. Your faithfulness is as enduring as the heavens.

Immortal Father, we command justice to run down like water and righteousness like a mighty stream within our judicial system in America. Your Word says that justice and righteousness are more acceptable to You than sacrifice. Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne. We confess that justice and righteousness will prevail in our nation, homes, workplaces, churches, schools and communities. You are the Lord who loves all of humankind; You are no respecter of persons. Lord, You created us in Your image and it is Your desire that we, Your creation, love each other as we love ourselves. Lord, we believe that You will raise us above the injustices of racism that our nation has witnessed lately. And because Your Spirit dwells within us, the Body of Christ, we confess that we will walk in righteousness and integrity. We will not discriminate against anyone because of their race, their sex, or their age. We will not pay back evil with more evil, but we will always do things in such a way that everyone can see that you are honorable.

***Holy Spirit, as I watch the news, show me how to pray about the injustices in our nation:***

Holy Spirit, please help our nation to heal from the wounds that the many instances of injustice have inflicted on the American people. Remind the members of the Body of Christ not to sin by letting anger control them. Grant each of us the desire and commitment to daily walk in Your justice and righteousness without prejudice or partiality. Deal with the hearts of those Christians who practice this ungodliness. Remind them to walk in Your Spirit and not in their flesh. Guide parents on how to talk with their children about this subject in a way that will not instill fear, anger, or hatred. Holy Spirit, I ask that You search my heart for areas of hidden discrimination or bias and remove it immediately from me.

Abba Father, forgive us for any acts of racism, sexism, and ageism. Forgive our nation for its injustice, prejudice, and oppression. Forgive our nation for loving power and things instead of people. Please forgive those persons who are presently practicing racism, sexism, and ageism. As the Body of Christ, we renounce the gods of racism, sexism, and ageism. Forgive me, Father, for not acknowledging that when I make blanket statements about race, sex, or age that I am discriminating. Father, forgive me for *(list any sins that you have committed)*.

Holy Spirit, remind us all of those we need to forgive and help us to be quick to forgive. As for me, Holy Spirit, bring to my remembrance those I need to forgive. *(Take a moment and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal names or faces of people that you may need to forgive. As He reveals them say, "I forgive name of person(s)." Now, trust the Lord to heal any wounds in your soul caused by unforgiveness.)*

Holy Spirit, help us all not to yield to temptation but deliver us from the evil one.

Triumphant King, You are greater than any other god. You do whatever You please throughout all heaven and earth, and on the seas and in their depths. You cause clouds to rise over the earth. You send lightning with the rain and release the winds from Your storehouses. Your Name, Lord, endures forever. Your fame is known to every generation. Yours, Lord, is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

#### 4. Concepts to Consider

Sabbath=Justice=GoodNews. Throughout the Biblical prophets one of the primary accusations leveled against the people of God is that they did not act justly. In Hebrew, justice is “mish-PAHT” מִשְׁפָּט which means demonstrating...

**...right and equitable behavior towards the neighbor.** *Mishpat* can also be translated “judgment,” making proper distinctions with wisdom and uprightness. It has to do with fairness and rightness in judgments with those over whom we have power. If justice exalts a nation, it is those nations that treat their citizens with equity, especially those weakest and least capable of influencing or contributing to our quality of life, which will be exalted.

*(from “The Message of Hosea 1-3: A Harlot’s Wages” by R. Mark Shipp, professor of Old Testament at Austin Graduate School of Theology. Leaven, Volume 17, Issue 1 2009, pp. 43-49. Link: <http://b.link/ShippAmos>)*

As we saw in the Ezekiel passage above (*directed to Judah*) and as we shall see in Hosea below (*directed to the ten Northern tribes collectively called “Israel”*), empty worship, faithlessness, idolatry, **and lack of justice** are the presenting symptoms of a sick people and nation:

*Now I will uncover [Israel’s] lewdness  
in the sight of her lovers [the foreign gods she worships],  
and no one shall rescue her out of My hand.  
And I will put an end to all her mirth,  
her feasts, her new moons, her Sabbaths,  
and all her appointed feasts.  
And I will lay waste her vines and her fig trees,*

*of which she said,  
‘These are my wages,  
which my lovers have given me.’  
I will make them a forest,  
and the beasts of the field shall devour them.*

*And I will betroth you to Me forever. I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness. And you shall know the Lord.*

***So you, by the help of your God, return,  
hold fast to love and justice,  
and wait continually for your God.”***  
(Hosea 2:10-12; 19 and 12:6, ESV)

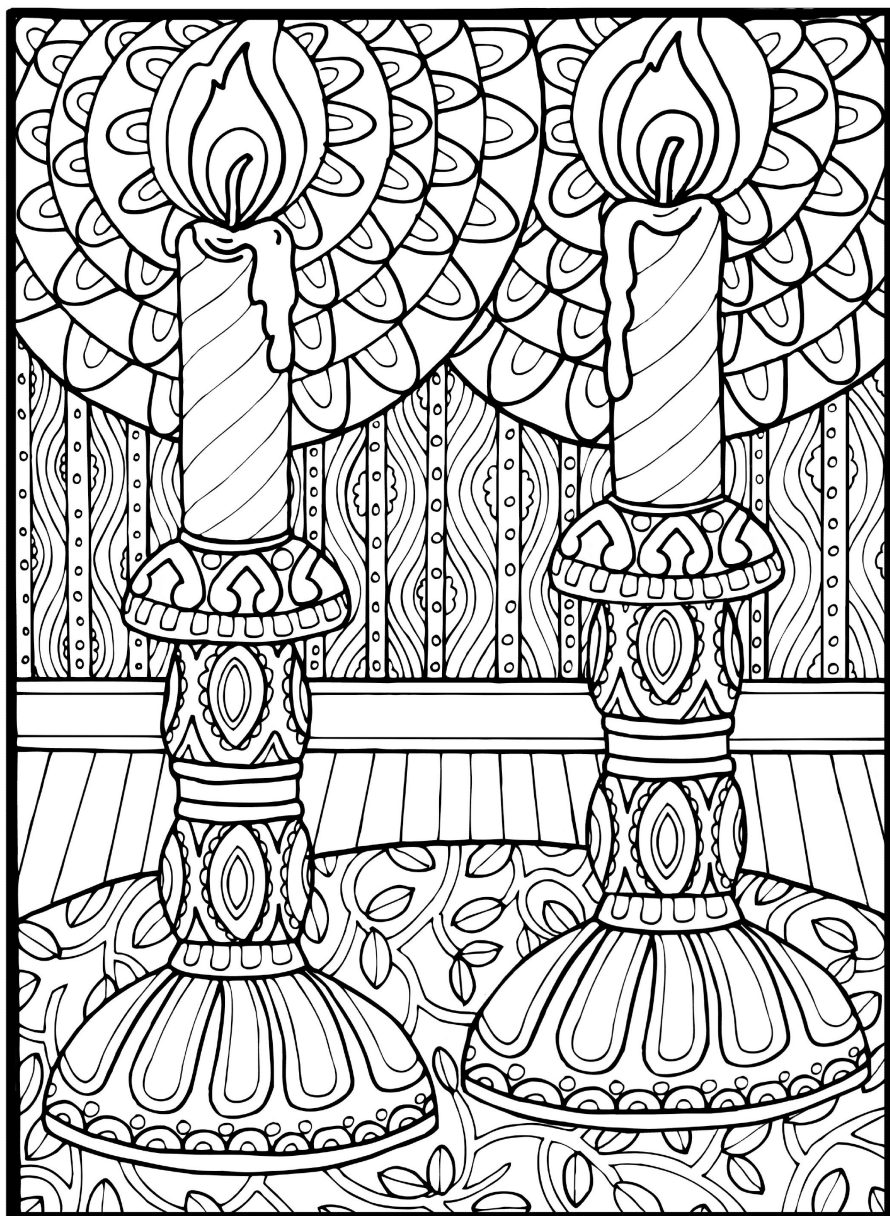
## **5. Reflection Questions**

**a. Personal Reflection:** Jesus illuminated justice via His summary of Torah, “*love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself*” (Luke 10:27). What areas in your life need justice? What situations need *you*, with God’s help, to act justly in them?

**b. Kingdom Reflection:** When we clear a space for justice to take root in our world, then we are living out of a Sabbath mindset. As the Body of Christ and as the Temple of the Holy Spirit, collectively we are meant to serve and be a shelter for the cause of justly "loving our neighbor" in our world. Where in your world could you partner with God and other believers to clear a space for justice to grow?

**Optional Time of Centering/Soaking:**

*If possible, take some time, perhaps 5 to 15 minutes, to get into a comfortable position and simply allow the Lord to minister to you at a deep level (Psalm 42:7). Turn off or put down all distractions. Close your eyes. Hold in your thoughts a meaningful word, phrase, or image from the Scripture you read today. Release all other thoughts and concerns into the Presence of the Lord. If your thoughts wander, that's okay, just gently return to your Biblical word, phrase, or image. You may want to set a timer.*



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# Day 41:

## “The Sabbath Experience”

### 1. Center Down

Our breath prayer for today: As you inhale, whisper, **“Restore the joy... As you exhale whisper, “...of our salvation!”**

### 2. Slowly read aloud the following Scripture

*One Sabbath, Jesus was strolling with His disciples through a field of ripe grain. Hungry, the disciples were pulling off the heads of grain and munching on them. Some Pharisees reported them to Jesus: “Your disciples are breaking the Sabbath rules!”*

*Jesus said, “Really? Didn’t you ever read what David and his companions did when they were hungry, how they entered the sanctuary and ate fresh bread off the altar, bread that no one but priests were allowed to eat? And didn’t you ever read in God’s Law that priests carrying out their Temple duties break Sabbath rules all the time and it’s not held against them?”*

*“There is far more at stake here than religion. If you had any idea what this Scripture meant—I prefer a flexible heart to an inflexible ritual—you wouldn’t be nitpicking like this. The Son of Man is no lackey to the Sabbath; He’s in charge.”*

*When Jesus left the field, He entered their meeting place. There was a man there with a crippled hand. They said to Jesus, “Is it legal to heal on the Sabbath?” They were baiting Him.*

*He replied, "Is there a person here who, finding one of your lambs fallen into a ravine, wouldn't, even though it was a Sabbath, pull it out? Surely kindness to people is as legal as kindness to animals!" Then He said to the man, "Hold out your hand." He held it out and it was healed. The Pharisees walked out furious, sputtering about how they were going to ruin Jesus. (Matthew 12:1-14, MSG)*

**For further exploration:**

Video: <http://b.link/SabbathExplainer>

**3. Kingdom Prayer**

Magnificent Father, we thank You for creating this vast and beautiful world. There are so many places for us to explore and experience life; ideal places where we can refresh ourselves physically, mentally, and spiritually. Thank You for the ability to travel and experience new things. Thank You for providing not only for our daily needs, but also for our need for rest and relaxation. How joyful are all who reverence You Lord, and follow Your ways! We will enjoy the fruit of our labor. How joyful and prosperous we will be! All honor and praise belong to You, our holy God, for giving us rest.

Faithful Father, in Your eternal wisdom, You have ordained a time of rest for all creation. You take pleasure in our recreation, for You richly give us all that we need for enjoyment. Today, we declare that parents will take advantage of the opportunity to spend time with their children and reconnect. We are often focused on our daily tasks, but today, it is time that we focus on replenishing ourselves. Therefore, we

commit to enjoying ourselves with our families. We will not entertain guilt or anxiety about setting aside our word for today. We will cease striving and enjoy this Sabbath time. Our children will get to know us on a deeper level and we will create fond memories together for them to pass down from generation to generation. We confess that the Holy Spirit will guide us as we make our Sabbath day plans, and we will receive supernatural inspiration. We will have fun!

Holy Spirit, remind us that the Sabbath is not only a day, it is a command of the Lord meant to be a part of our lifestyle. When we relax and recreate, it is a sign that our total trust is in the Father, not on our own abilities. Help us to understand the importance of making time with our family a priority. Show us creative ways to make memories with our families. Show us all the activities that fit within our family budget that we can share as a family during our Sabbath rest. Help us all to be willing to try new things and engage in new experiences that will expand our minds and help us to grow closer to our loved ones. Strengthen us to truly disconnect from all distractions, like phone calls, emails, and text messages. Help us to guard our leisure time and maintain appropriate boundaries with our employers, co-workers, and others. Remind us all that leisure actually increases the effectiveness of our labor. Above all, teach us how to take advantage of this Sabbath rest so that we don't lose sight of what's most important in life.

Righteous Father, forgive us of all our sins. Forgive us for sometimes forgetting the importance of unplugging. Forgive us for neglecting our families and ignoring the need to

to connect and fellowship with one another. Forgive those who are driven by their needs and wants so much that they refuse to trust You to take care of them. Lord, forgive me for *(list any sins that you have committed)*.

Holy Spirit, remind us of all those we need to forgive and help us to be quick to forgive. As for me, Holy Spirit, bring to my remembrance those I need to forgive. *(Take a moment and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal names or faces of people that you may need to forgive. As He reveals them say, "I forgive name of person(s)." Now, trust the Lord to heal any wounds in your soul caused by unforgiveness.)*

Holy Spirit, help us all not to yield to temptation but deliver us from the evil one.

Royal King, what a variety of things You have made! In Your wisdom, You have made them all. The earth is full of Your creatures. May Your glory continue forever! You take pleasure in all You have made. The earth trembles at Your glance and the mountains smoke at Your touch. How magnificent You are! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

#### **4. Concepts to Consider**

So this week let's actually celebrate a traditional Sabbath. Just go for it! If at all possible, arrange to have a family meal together on Friday night at sundown. However, if you are unable to set aside Friday evening, then find any time this week to try out "the Sabbath Experience." If you are single, you may want to consider inviting over a group of friends and family to help celebrate.

I've created a basic Sabbath Celebration order to follow below, but please feel free to use any one of the other more detailed resources listed here:

1. The Hebrew4Christians.com Sabbath Seder (order) available at <http://b.link/SabbathGuide4u>
2. The "Shabbat & Sabbath" 3 part video series from Celebration Church: <http://page.video/How2Sabbath>
3. The book *Celebrating Biblical Feasts: In Your Home or Church* by Martha Zimmerman which you may find on [Amazon](#) or [Google Books](#). (available in print and ebook)

## “THE SABBATH EXPERIENCE” GUIDE

### **Before Sundown Friday:**

1. Plan a special family meal.

2a. Make or buy Challah (*HA-lah* “portion or loaf”) bread (*where to buy in Houston, TX: Three Brothers' Bakery, Randall's on W. Belfort, or Belden's*) Recipe: <http://cookery.recipes/Challah>

*(Note: If you do not have access to Challah, then any good quality loaf bread or rolls will do.)*

3. Set the dinner table with your best dishes.

a. Additional items:

1. 2 candles
2. A bottle of grape juice
3. A special cup or glass
4. A plate for the Challah bread
5. A cloth cover for the Challah (*A dish towel is fine.*)
6. A bowl of fresh water for handwashing
7. A hand towel to dry hands
8. A small box with a lid or porous bag filled with sweet-smelling spices (*any combination of cloves, cinnamon sticks, anise, nutmeg, dried fruit peels, etc.*)

## **Friday Evening:**

1. Gather the family around the dinner table a little before sunset. Light the candles at the times listed below:

February 15, 2019: 5:53pm

February 22, 2019: 5:58pm

March 1, 2019: 6:03pm

*A detailed time table is available  
here: [http://time.lighting/  
ShabbatCandles](http://time.lighting/ShabbatCandles)*

*Note: While the times above are traditional, if you're late,  
don't worry; remember, we live by grace!*

2. The eldest woman of the house should light the two candles; with her hands she should make a circular motion over the candles three times; this gesture serves to welcome in the warmth and joy of Sabbath; then she should pray the following prayer. *(All girls and women present may also pray along.)* If no women are available, any male over 12 years of age may light the candles.

***“Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has set us apart with His commandments and has commanded us to kindle the Sabbath lights. May our light so shine before others that they may see our good works and glorify You, our Father in Heaven. We thank You for sending Your Son Jesus our Messiah Who is the Light of World.”***

3. Next, it's time to bless one another, especially the children. Take time to speak a brief word of positive affirmation over each person. *(A suggested starting phrase might be: "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, and I appreciate you because...")*

Parents, bless your children; husbands, bless your wives; wives, bless husbands; children, bless your parents; friends around the table bless one another.

Alternately, everyone around the table may simply say the following blessing together:

***“May the Lord bless you and keep you; May the Lord make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you; May the Lord show you His kindness and give you peace.”***

Here are the traditional blessings for the children. Either or both parents may say...

(For **boys**.)

***“May you be like Ephraim and Manasseh who, though born to Joseph in Egypt, received an equal inheritance with the sons of Jacob. May the Lord bless you and keep you; May the Lord make His face to shine upon you, And be gracious unto you; May the Lord show you His kindness and give you peace.”***

(For **girls**.)

***“May you be like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah who were strong women and mothers of our faith. May the Lord bless you and keep you; May the Lord make His face to shine upon you, And be gracious unto you; May the Lord show you His kindness and give you peace.”***

4. Next, pour grape juice into your special cup/glass then have the father or oldest male in the home lift the cup and pray the following prayer:

***“Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.”***

After the prayer, the leader takes a few sips from the cup (*note: you do not have to drink it all, and you may drink the remaining juice with your meal.*)



5. Next, we ceremonially wash our hands. Anyone or everyone may pray the follow prayer before washing their hands in a bowl of fresh water.

*“Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, Who has sanctified us with Your commandments, and has command us concerning the washing of hands. We follow the example of Jesus who served the disciples through the washing with water.”*

You may want to use a small cup to help pour the water over your hands. Use a hand towel to dry. This is also an opportunity to serve one another (*hold the bowl for your neighbor as they wash their hands*).

6. Now it's time to bless the bread (Challah). Uncover the bread and recite the following prayer. Anyone or everyone may say:

*“Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has brought forth bread from the earth, and we thank You for Jesus, the Bread of Life.”*

7. Next, it's time to eat your family meal. It is traditional to say a blessing after the meal:

***Leader: Let us say grace.***

*All: Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth*

*and forever more. We will bless our God of whose bounty we have partaken and through Whose goodness we live.*

***Leader: Blessed be God the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth, and Blessed be Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, and Blessed be the Holy Spirit our Comforter.***

*All: We thank you for providing our food this day and for feeding the whole world through your provision. Be pleased, O Lord our God, to strengthen us by your commandment to observe the Sabbath, since this day is great and holy before You, that we may find rest and restoration in Your lovingkindness in accordance with Your will. In your favor, O Lord our God, grant us such peace that there may be no trouble, grief or lamenting on our day of rest. We pray these things through Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith who lives and reigns with You, Father and with the consolation of the Holy Spirit, Amen.*

8. After the meal and prayers it is time to enjoy your Sabbath! Rest. Recoup. Reset. You may want to limit the use of phones and tablets over the next 24 hours. Sabbath activity ideas: Plan a family movie or game night together. Plan a family outing or event everyone would enjoy for tomorrow. Have fun!

9. Sabbath ends on Saturday evening at sundown. It is traditional to gather one more time as a family for “Havdalah” ([hahv-DAH-lah] “separation”) meaning we take time to separate the holy time of the Sabbath from the rest of the week and enter the new week refreshed and ready to go! Light a candle,

pass around the box or bag of sweet spices and take a moment to breathe in the sweet aroma. And then pray the following prayer together:

*“Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the Universe Who distinguishes between the holy and ordinary, between light and dark, between the seventh day and the six days of work.*

*May the One who distinguishes between the holy and the ordinary pardon our sins through Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant us strength and power through Your Holy Spirit and give us all a good, prosperous, and peaceful week. May gladness reign and joy increase!*

*Shavuah Tov! (Sha-VOO-ah Tohv) Have a good week! Amen!”*

*(Note: If you can’t do this ceremony right at sunset, it’s fine. Try to find a time to gather before everyone goes to bed.)*

**\*\*10. IMPORTANT:** Remember, celebrating Sabbath Friday sundown to Saturday sundown does not replace worshiping together as a Church Family on Saturday night or Sunday. Like the earliest church, this week we have the privilege to experience Sabbath AND worship our Risen Lord on Saturday night or Sunday, the First Day of the Week. As followers of Jesus, Sabbath observance is not an obligation, but it is a God-ordained opportunity to recuperate and celebrate!

## 5. Reflection Questions

**a. Personal Reflection.** What did the Lord reveal to you as you celebrated the Sabbath? What did you learn? What challenged you? Why do you think it is important to “remember the Sabbath and keep it holy?”

**b. Kingdom Reflection.** We are Sabbath People. How will you embody Sabbath today to those around you? How will you lovingly encourage others to do the same?

### **Optional Time of Centering/Soaking**

*If possible, take some time, perhaps 5 to 15 minutes, to get into a comfortable position and simply allow the Lord to minister to you at a deep level (Psalm 42:7). Turn off or put down all distractions. Close your eyes. Hold in your thoughts a meaningful word, phrase, or image from the Scripture you read today. Release all other thoughts and concerns into the Presence of the Lord. If your thoughts wander, that's okay, just gently return to your Biblical word, phrase, or image. You may want to set a timer.*



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# Day 42:

## A Psalm 23 Kind of Day

### 1. Center Down

Our breath prayer for today. As you inhale, whisper,  
***“The Lord is my Shepherd...”*** As you exhale whisper,  
***“...I have all that I need.”***

### 2. Slowly read aloud the following Scripture

*God, my shepherd! I don't need a thing.  
You have bedded me down in lush meadows,  
You find me quiet pools to drink from.  
True to Your Word, You let me catch my breath  
and send me in the right direction.  
Even when the way goes through Death Valley,  
I'm not afraid when You walk at my side.  
Your trusty shepherd's crook makes me feel secure.  
You serve me a six-course dinner right in front of my enemies.  
You revive my drooping head; my cup brims with blessing.  
Your beauty and love chase after me very day of my life.  
I'm back home in the house of God for the rest of my life!  
(Psalm 23, MSG)*

### For further exploration:

Video: <http://psalm.live/Psalm23Meditation>

<http://rabbi.live/Pslam23Teaching>

### **3. Kingdom Prayer**

Blessed Father, we thank You for loving us so much. Thank You for keeping us from all harm and watching over our lives daily. We thank You for Your angels whom You have assigned to protect and guard us. Your unfailing love is better than life itself. O how we praise You! As long as we live, we will lift up our hands in prayer to You. Because You are our Helper, we sing for joy in the shadow of Your wings. We cling to You, for Your strong right hand holds us securely. There is no one who can compare to You, Father. You are the source of our very existence. We give honor and glory to Your Name because You have been faithful to preserve our lives and keep us from seen and unseen dangers.

Almighty Father, as we go about each day fulfilling Your will for our lives, we, as a Church Family, declare that You are our Great Shepherd. Where You lead, we will follow. We declare that because we are the Godly, You will keep us and our families safe forever. We know that You hear us when we call to You. We confess that when we travel on our journeys from place to place, You give us, our children, and our possessions safety and protection. We decree that no matter how many troubles surround us, You will protect us from the anger of our enemies. The power of Your right hand saves us. We will work out the plans for our lives because of Your faithful, enduring love. We will always trust You. You alone



are our refuge and place of safety. Father, our hope is in You, our help and our shield!

Holy Spirit, speak wisdom to our hearts when we are tempted to stray outside of the Father's realm of safety. Deliver us from pride so that we don't miss out on valuable opportunities to receive wisdom and wise counsel. We understand that wisdom is a necessary component for our safety. Show us how to secure our health, our children, our finances, our homes, and our businesses. Help us to teach our children the Word of God so that they will hide it in their hearts and retrieve wisdom as they make decisions about where to go and with whom they should associate. Help us to heed Your divine warnings and not dismiss them as trivial or insignificant. Cover those of our loved ones who are living or working in dangerous environments due to the call that is upon their lives. Don't let any evil conquer them or any plague come near them. Teach our Church Family how to live by every word that comes from the mouth of the Father.

*Ask the Holy Spirit to show you any vulnerable areas in your life where you may be at risk. Pray and ask for guidance and strategy to get to safety:*

Merciful Father, please forgive us for failing to seek Your will in all that we do. Forgive us for being too proud and stubborn to respond to warnings, and for putting ourselves and others at senseless risk. Forgive

those of us who have been too distracted to keep our children from potential dangers. Forgive those of us who have become lazy and undisciplined about prayer. Forgive us for the times we have acted out of rage and anger, giving a foothold to the devil. Lord, forgive me for *(list any sins that You have committed)*.

Holy Spirit, remind us all of all those we need to forgive and help us to be quick to forgive. As for me, Holy Spirit, bring to my remembrance those I need to forgive. *(Take a moment and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal names or faces of people that You may need to forgive. As He reveals them say, "I forgive name of person(s)." Now, trust the Lord to heal any wounds in Your soul caused by unforgiveness.)*

Holy Spirit, help us not to yield to temptation but deliver us from the evil one.

Triumphant King, You are matchless! Let the whole world glorify You. Let it sing Your praise. You will march forth like a mighty hero. You will come out like a mighty warrior, full of fury. You will shout Your battle cry and crush all Your enemies. You sit in majesty in Jerusalem, exalted above the nations. Let them praise Your great and awesome Name. Your Name is holy! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

**Scripture References for the Written Text:** Psalm 121:7, Luke 4:10, Psalm 63:3-4, 7-8, Psalm 23:1, Psalm 37:28, Ezra 8:21, Psalm 138:7-8, Psalm 91:2, Psalm 33:20, Psalm 91:10, Matthew 4:4, Proverbs 3:6, Ephesians 4:27, Matthew 6:13, Isaiah 42:12-13, Psalm 99:2-3

#### 4. Concepts to Consider

Take some time today to reflect on all we've experienced and learned this week regarding Sabbath: Sabbath as re-set button; extending Sabbath ethics into the world; Sabbath as trusting God; Sabbath as justice; Sabbath as worship and rest.

As a means of enhancing your reflection, you may want to practice *Lectio Divina* with Psalm 23 today. It might also be interesting to create a visual, written, musical, movement, or media expression of Psalm 23 as another way of giving God glory. Use your creative time as a way of concentrating on the Holy Spirit's ability to work through you in beautiful ways. *(Avoid perfectionistic tendencies here. Creative endeavors before the Lord are not about objective perfection or someone else's opinion of what is or isn't "beautiful." It is about allowing the creating and re-creating God to heal and restore your innate creative imagination, as a reflection of His image. It is all about pure flow and expression. Just breathe and have fun!)*

Further, as you move through the day, observe where you might "see" Psalm 23 around you. Go on a Psalm 23 "treasure hunt." What words, phrases or images from the Psalm might enliven something you see, hear, or experience today?

## 5. Reflection Questions

**a. Personal Reflection.** As you think back on this week, how has your perspective on Sabbath been enhanced? How will you carry Sabbath into the next week? Into the rest of your life?

**b. Kingdom Reflection.**

How can the Shalom of Sabbath we see clearly in Psalm 23 become more of a reality in our world? Let us pray diligently for it! Pray for Sabbath peace in Jerusalem (*link to prayer: <http://prayer.social/JerusalemPeace>*); pray for shalom in the Middle-East; in the US; in the Americas; in the whole world! What creative ideas did the Lord give you this week for bringing “Sabbath impact” into our world?

*(As you feel led, feel free to share your ideas with Pastor Kim Orr (korr@wvumc.com) and she will pass them on to the appropriate Windsor Village Church Family leadership.)*







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